DIGITALEUROPE celebrates first anniversary of EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement

One year after the entry into force of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and the adequacy decision guaranteeing the safe flows of personal data between the two economies, the Director-General of DIGITALEUROPE, Cecilia Bonefeld-Dahl, said:

“Happy birthday to the EU-Japan EPA! This was a landmark agreement for many reasons, not least because it sent a vital global signal in support of open trade at a time of increasing protectionism. Although the agreement is only one year old, businesses, citizens and consumers on both sides are already reaping the benefits.

Equally important was the adequacy decision on data, creating the world’s largest area of safe data flows. Secure and unhindered data flows are essential for modern, international companies to succeed. European and Japanese citizens can also be safe in the knowledge that their privacy will be respected.

Looking forward, the EU and Japan should continue to lead by example by including ambitious data provisions in a revised, improved EPA, and by pushing for a speedy and comprehensive WTO agreement on ecommerce. They should also continue the excellent cooperation on digital topics like artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and research and development.”

Background

On 1 February 2019, the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) entered into force, setting the new global standard for trade agreements. It is the EU’s most ambitious bilateral deal to date and cements the strategic partnership between Europe and Japan based on shared values, challenges and opportunities.
A few days previously, the Commission secured an adequacy decision with Japan, which allows for personal data to flow freely between the two economies on the basis of strong data protection guarantees.

These agreements demonstrate how global supporters of open trade can spur on international cooperation, as illustrated by the coordinated actions taken in the course of Japan’s and France’s G20 and G7 presidencies last year to promote ‘Data Free Flow with Trust’ and ‘Human-Centric AI’.

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